

SENATE No. 1798

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Stanley C. Rosenberg

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying bill:

An Act CREATING A SPECIAL COMMISSION ON MEDICAL LEGAL PARTNERSHIPS

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Mr. Rosenberg

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Hampshire and Franklin

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Nine

AN ACT CREATING A SPECIAL COMMISSION ON MEDICAL LEGAL PARTNERSHIPS

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. There shall be a special commission to consist of 18 members to review the statewide implementation of the medical-legal partnership model – partnerships between legal services offices and community health centers or hospitals which focus on ensuring that low-income patients’ basic human needs are met, and that health disparities are reduced, through preventive legal intervention and assistance. The special commission shall consist of the following members: one member of the judiciary committee, one member of the health care finance committee, and 16 persons to be appointed by the governor, one of whom shall be a representative of the Boston Bar Association, one of whom shall be a representative of a health care-related foundation, one of whom shall be a representative of a third-party insurer, one of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation, one of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Bar Association, two of whom shall be representatives of the MLAC-funded legal services community, one of whom shall be a representative of a non-MLAC-funded, IOLTA-funded legal services program, one of whom shall be a representative of the MA Association of Community Health Centers, one of whom shall be a representative of the MA Hospital Association, one of whom shall be a representative of the law school community, one of whom shall be a representative of the medical school community, one of whom shall be a representative of

EOHHS, one of whom shall be a representative of the Disparities Action Network, one of whom shall be a representative of MLPC, one of whom shall be a representative of the private bar, and two of whom shall be health care staff who work as part of a medical-legal partnership.

The commission shall examine the implementation of medical-legal partnership in Massachusetts, with a special emphasis on exploring current and potential funding mechanisms and matching dollars between the health care delivery system and legal services. The commission shall also examine the role of preventive legal access as a strategy to address health disparities. The commission shall also convene a statewide summit on medical-legal partnership, in collaboration with interested stakeholders from the legal, medical, public health and governmental communities.

Said commission shall meet a minimum of 4 times, and report the results of its study and recommendations, if any, together with drafts of legislation necessary to carry its recommendations into effect by filing the same with the clerk of the senate and the clerk of the House of Representatives.